

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SCCT-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 035649

R 101455Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9394

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

DIA

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1371

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PO

SUBJ: EXPLOSION ABOARD PORTUGUESE TROOP SHIP NIASSA

REF: (A) LISBON 3101 OCT 27, 1970

(B) LISBON 3136 OCT 30, 1970

(C) LISBON 3347 NOV 20, 1970

(D) LUANDA 0251 JUNE 17, 1971

(E) LISBON 3973 OCT 29, 1973

SUMMARY: EXPLOSION OCCURRED ON BOARD TROOP SHIP "NIASSA"

APRIL 9 IN WHICH 4 SOLDIERS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED. SHIP,

WHICH ABOUT TO DEPART LISBON FOR PORTUGUESE AFRICA

WITH UPWARDS 500 TROOPS, NOT SERIOUSLY DAMAGED AND

SAILED FEW HOURS LATER. END SUMMARY.

1. AT 1800 HOURS APRIL 9 EXPLOSION OCCURRED IN BUNK ROOM
IN HOLD OF CHARTERED PORTUGUESE TROOP SHIP NIASSA, USED
TO TRANSPORT MEN TO AND FROM PORTUGUESE AFRICA. SHIP,
10800 DEADWEIGHT TONS, CAN CARRY UPWARDS 500 TROOPS.

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ACCORDING LOCAL CORRESPONDENT, ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLER

TO FOREIGN NEWS AGENCY WARNED OF BOMB JUST BEFORE BLAST
WENT OFF. NO GROUP HAS CLAIMED CREDIT FOR BOMBING.

2. NIASSA WAS ABOUT TO SAIL WHEN EXPLOSION OCCURRED.
DOCKSIDE AREA APPARENTLY CROWDED WITH RELATIVES SEEING
SONS OFF TO WAR. JYCORDCGG PRESS REPORTS AIR BLAST OF
EXPLOSION CAUSED LIGHT INJURIES TO 4 SOLDIERS. MATERIAL
DAMAGE LIGHT (ACCORDING ONE REPORT THOSE ON QUAY DID NOT
NOTICE EXPLOSION) AND NIASSA DEPARTED PIER EARLY MORNING
HOURS. ANOTHER SOURCE, HOWEVER, REPORTS SEEING EXTERNAL
HULL DAMAGE, WHICH WAS REPAIRED BY DIVERS IN A FEW HOURS
TIME.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS FORST EXPLOSION REPORTED IN RECENT
YEARS ON BOARD TROOP AND CARGO SHIPS DOCKED IN LISBON,
AND FIRST SABOTAGE IN PORTUGAL SINCE OCT 1973 (REF E).
SEVERAL SHIPS WERE BOMBED IN LATE 1970 (REFS A,B,C),
AND ANOTHER (REF D) IN JUNE 1971. THESE LATTER TWO
EXPLOSIONS ALSO INVOLVED NIASSA.

APRIL 9 EXPLOSION PROBABLY UNRELATED RECENT MILITARY
TURMOIL, AND DESIGNED BY TIMING TO PROTEST AFRICAN
WARS AND POSSIBLY DELAY TROOP DEPARTURE.
SCOTT

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Message Attributes

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